

A Freedom Fighter to His Last Breath

Robert Faurisson, Demonized Skeptic who Battled for the Right to Doubt

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**Robert Faurisson and Michael Hoffman at the conference of
the Institute for Historical Review, Irvine, California, 2002**

French Professor Robert Faurisson died of heart failure at his longtime home in Vichy, France on October 21. His life was like something out of Alfred Jarry by way of André Breton, a surreal circus in which clowns and stage magicians, barkers, burlesquers and fire-eaters, incessantly circled and mobbed the one sane person under the Big Top.

Faurisson's sanity was an expression of his conscience and though an atheist, the historical parallels are unmistakable: Thomas More refusing on principle King Henry VIII's marriage to Anne Boleyn; Martin Luther rejecting submission to the commands of Emperor Charles V: "Here I stand. I can do no other." Faurisson could do no other. Compromise and surrender were not in his DNA. Above all, he admired men and women who would not recant their doubts in the face of the loss of good name, bank account, career, freedom, and life itself.

Those who sneer at the professor for his "unforgivable" doubts about the existence of the holy execution gas chamber relic in Auschwitz, seldom deny that, with the exception of death, he suffered all of the other penalties for the "crime" of his skepticism. His enemies say that he merited those severities. They honor skepticism toward the dogmas they despise, and despise skepticism toward the dogmas they honor. They have made a great saint out of Galileo and an evil cretin out of Faurisson. One need not be an "anti-Semite" to note the bankruptcy of this double standard.

Faurisson's Inspiration: Paul Rassinier

In the media's search for the roots of Faurisson's supposed "anti-semitism" and "neo-Nazism" (because no one can doubt The Holy Truth except from anything other than impure motives), the name Paul Rassinier is seldom permitted to intrude on the cartoon-like demonization process. It was Rassinier who was Faurisson's spiritual and intellectual mentor. A member of the anti-Nazi French

resistance, he was arrested by the Nazis, brutalized and interned in the Buchenwald concentration camp. After the war, Rassinier served briefly in the French National Assembly. In the 1950s he was deeply disturbed by what he regarded as unconscionable exaggerations of Nazi crimes, including claims of mass death by poison gas. He expressed his views in *The Lie of Ulysses: A Glance at the Literature of Concentration Camp Inmates* (1950), and *The Drama of the European Jews* (1964), among other works.

Faurisson's study of Rassinier's work led him to a passionate interest in his doubts and questions. To explain away this freethinking curiosity and healthy skepticism in terms of the pathology of Jew-hate, is a cheap and pathetic trick. In the 1960s Rassinier admonished Faurisson, who was a dedicated amateur athlete, "Stop the tennis and the skiing and get to work." And work he did, *un travail de bénédictin*, inspiring people on the Left and Right of all races and religions, from Henri Rocques and Roger Garaudy, to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Dieudonné M'bala M'bala.

After obtaining his doctorate from the Sorbonne, Robert served as Professor of French Literature at the University of Lyon, where he taught classes on the 19th century symbolist poets such as Arthur Rimbaud, authenticated disputed texts, and became an authority on the misanthropic, 20th century dystopian novelist, Louis-Ferdinand Céline.

Céline's friend and factotum, Albert Paraz, the chemical engineer turned writer, penned an introduction to Rassinier's *Ulysses*, which led Robert in 1980 to turn to a cache of Céline's letters published by the distinguished Gallimard press in Paris as *Lettres à Albert Paraz*. In one of these, reproduced on p. 276 of the book, Céline wrote the following: "(Rassinier) tends to cast doubt on the magical gas chamber. That's quite something!"

This is a seemingly minor observation, but Robert never forgot it and repeated it in one form or another throughout his life. Céline remains a towering presence in French literature and his early intuition that there was some fabulous superstition at the heart of the homicidal gas chamber allegations, led Faurisson to the actual gas chamber at San Quentin prison in California, where he contrasted the monumental gassing apparatus there, with its massive, submarine-like door, and extraordinary, hours-long measures for safely decontaminating the chamber, with the alleged gassing facility explained as having been in operation in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Robert considered the explanation for the supposed homicidal gas chambers in Poland as “magical.” Céline’s witticism became part of his lexicon.

Faurisson entered the national scene in France 1978 after its leading newspaper, *Le Monde*, published his incendiary essay, “The Problem of the Gas Chambers, or the Rumor of Auschwitz.” In the United States this would be the equivalent of publication in the *New York Times*. Faurisson’s fate was sealed henceforth. He would either become the Doubting Thomas of Europe, or he would collapse and recant under the immense pressure and strain of the savage reaction of enraged true believers. As we know, he compounded his “heresy” further in the coming years and pressed onward with virile indifference toward the harassment and torment with which he was afflicted.

Faurisson and the Left

Though it is said by the fake news purveyors that he found a home on the extreme Right (the *New York Times* of Oct. 22 writes, “His notoriety only grew through an endless cycle of articles in the far-right press”), Faurisson was promoted and published by a minority of notable Leftists, including Pierre Guillaume and Serge Thion, who welcomed his scholarship. His 1980 volume, *Mémoire en défense contre ceux qui m'accusent de falsifier l'histoire: la*

question des chambres de gaz, with a preface by Massachusetts Institute of Technology Professor Noam Chomsky, was issued by the Marxist publishing house, La Vielle Taupe.

Why this support from some on the Left? They reasoned that the homicidal gas chamber genocide-narrative serves to forever place every crime of capitalism in a trivialized and subordinate category. “No matter how many civilians the U.S. government killed in Iraq it can’t compare to what the Germans did to the Jews,” is the cliché. Certain Leftists consider the inculcation of this mindset a tactic for the perpetual minimization of the crimes of all other forces, in particular plutocracies and oligarchies. If the gas chambers said to have been used to execute a million human beings in Auschwitz were an imposture, then some on the Left believed it was necessary to say so.

Another of Robert’s friends and colleagues was Judaic-Austrian Ditlieb Felderer, an eccentric though brilliant forensic researcher who had been a refugee as a child in the Second World War. After obtaining residency in Sweden, Felderer as an adult converted to the Jehovah’s Witnesses. He became a top researcher for them and was dispatched to study the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, where Witnesses had been interned. He made more than a dozen trips, beginning in 1978, and took thousands of rare color photos of the museum’s “exhibits,” where he discovered to his shock, that many were fake. Felderer shared his research with Faurisson. (Felderer was excommunicated by the Witnesses for publishing his findings).

Attempting to force Faurisson into a political category to which he did not subscribe or belong, is a way of falsifying the reality that like Felderer, he was a pursuer of truth wherever it leads, and however it may surprise or appall. Unjustly assigning to him a devotion to “far-Right” ideology is intended to buttress the propaganda that he had ulterior “Fascist” or “anti-Semitic” motives. This device was employed at its most asinine level on October 22

by one Ethan Epstein, associate editor of the neocon-Republican newspaper, *The Weekly Standard*, wherein Epstein hallucinated the following: “Faurisson took the usual Holocaust denial line: it never happened, but it *should* have. One of the ironies of Holocaust denial is that it is an allegedly ‘objective’ historical inquiry, yet is embraced exclusively by those with an animus towards Jews. That suggests that Holocaust deniers are fully aware that they are lying.”

Mr. Epstein puts forth enormities that we must accept on his authority: Prof. Faurisson believed Judaic people should have been exterminated. Everyone who denies that they were exterminated has “an animus toward Jews” and is “fully aware” that they were exterminated. This is the patter of a carnival buffoon.

Zündel Trial, 1985

Confuting the “eyewitnesses” and the “expert”

Beginning in 1983, German-Canadian publisher Ernst Zündel came under intense pressure from the government of Canada for claiming that the crimes of the Nazis had been distorted out of all proportion to reality. In that year his right to mail literature was suspended by the government (he was forced to travel eighty miles from Toronto to Niagara Falls, New York to avail himself of a post office). In 1984 the government of Canada announced that Zündel would be prosecuted for “false news” for having published the booklet, *Did Six Million Really Die?* All the resources of the state were employed to assemble a formidable prosecution team consisting of “Holocaust survivor eyewitnesses,” and “one of the world’s leading experts on the Holocaust,” Dr. Raul Hilberg, author of the three volume *Destruction of European Jewry*. The intent was to have Zündel imprisoned for two years.

The smart money put odds on Zündel being found guilty in a matter of days, his defense disgraced and debunked. After all, like the implanted meme says, “How can you deny the Holocaust?”

But that's the wrong question to ask. Whether or not the *fact* of the mass murder of Judaic persons by the Nazis qualifies as planet earth's only officially certified Holocaust™ *is not the issue*, it is rather a linguistic diversion—the product of the minting of an Orwellian neologism. The Soviets, Maoists, Protestants, Catholics, African animists, Aztecs, Conquistadors, Ottoman Turks and Americans in Iraq, have all committed mass murder. The revisionist skeptic in actuality poses this question: was the murder of Judaics an unprecedented, mass chemical-industrial extermination employing poison gas?

If the answer is no, then there is very little that is unique about Nazi mass murder. It is of the same barbarity as Soviet and Maoist massacres. Faurisson devoted his life to this question on scientific and technical grounds, while doubting the official story, beginning with many of the principal fables upheld at the Nuremberg trials.

The odds-makers had it backwards. The 1985 Zündel trial turned out to be an extraordinary overthrow of the pompous assumptions of the disciples of the Nazi gas chamber extermination dogma. The “eyewitnesses,” under expert cross-examination by Doug Christie, powered by Faurisson's intricate knowledge and command of the facts, admitted that they had not seen what they had claimed to have seen. They confessed in court they had only heard rumors and seen nothing approaching a gassing. This was an astounding turnabout.

The chief witness for the prosecution, Prof. Hilberg, that giant of Holocaustianity, found himself debating Prof. Faurisson, through defense attorney Christie's Faurisson-informed cross-examination. Robert sat at the defense table, regularly providing Christie with texts and documents which reduced Hilberg, the “authority” whose knowledge could not be questioned, to a quivering pile of self-contradictory nonsense, and simultaneous startling revelations (there is “no scientific evidence for the gassings” was one of his

confessions). This writer reported the trial from the press gallery. The contest was one for the history books: the first debate on the homicidal gas chambers between a revisionist professor and a “Holocaust” professor, wherein the latter was defeated by the former, lending weight to the probability that the gassings’ imposture maintains credibility only in a vacuum where no contradictions, challenges or cross-examinations are permitted.

Faurisson was a man of the Enlightenment. He was no “hater.” While at Zündelhaus I remember sharing a snack with him and a couple of World War II German army veterans. Robert was talking and he paused to try and recall the name of Julius Streicher, the Nazi-era publisher in Germany of the infamous Jew-hating newspaper, *Der Stürmer*. He asked us, “Who was that man who wrote those disgusting things about the Jews?” There was no one at the table he was trying to impress or needing to deceive, just one American revisionist and two combat vets of the German military. He was at his ease. If it had been his custom to disparage Judaic people, he would have expressed it on that occasion as a matter of habit, or one of the other times I conversed with him or overheard his conversation out of camera and microphone range. On the contrary, this was the humane tenor of Robert’s private chats. The primitive antediluvians consumed by hatred for him made themselves believe that his soul was as shriveled as their own. They were wrong.

The 1985 Zündel trial will remain Robert Faurisson’s finest hour. He paid dearly for it. In 1989, at age 60, he was assaulted in a park near his home by what the *New York Times* on Oct. 22 described as “the Sons of Jewish Memory.” The *Times* reports without elaboration that he was “beaten.” In truth Faurisson was *severely* beaten about the face and required reconstructive surgery. His attackers were not prosecuted. As soon as he was fully recovered, he was back on the barricades—becoming the

Kafkaesque Man—always on trial, repeatedly prosecuted in dozens of cases in France for committing thought crimes and sacrilege against The Holy People (“offending the memory” etc.). He recounted to me his time in jail only in terms of the kindness and courtesy shown to him by his French-Muslim guards. He was more often fined than jailed. The financial toll was considerable. His life was in many respects impossible. Insults to his faithful wife, her expulsion from her Catholic choir, the reputational damage to his children and siblings—it was unending. Of course he became unemployable as a professor.

France’s “Faurisson Law”

In 1990, with him in mind, the French National Assembly passed the Faurisson law, otherwise known as the Fabius-Gayssot Act, criminalizing the expression of public doubts about the execution gas chamber claims. Here was a national law specifically legislated to gag one man!

After Robert was removed from his university professorship due to the enactment of Fabius-Gayssot, he challenged the legislation as a violation of his right to freedom of speech under the “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” The “Human Rights Committee” upheld his condemnation however, while the French courts ruled that the Gayssot Act was constitutional. This from a nation that had criminalized Calvinist and Huguenot theology in the 16th and 17th centuries, and then turned around and made Catholic theology a capital offense in the late 18th century. It seems that in France the inquisitor’s ignominy is ineradicable. No wonder then that when Muslims are sanctimoniously lectured about their “misplaced” rage over blasphemy against Mohammed, they respond by wanting to know how it is that Faurisson’s “blasphemy” of the gas chambers is illegal in France while attacks on their Prophet are protected speech.

L’Affaire Garaudy/Abbé Pierre

By December of 1995 Faurisson’s research had become the basis for the celebrated French intellectual Roger Garaudy’s 1995 book, *Les Mythes fondateurs de la politique israélienne* (“The Founding Myths of Israeli Politics”; caveat: the second edition, published in March, 1996 is self-censored). Garaudy feared citing Faurisson by name as the source for major portions of his book. This tactic did him little good. It was obvious to the enemies of freedom that Garaudy’s source was Faurisson’s published work. The Zionists and their media were exceedingly alarmed by this development, given Garaudy’s standing in French letters. He became the target of the usual libel and harassment. Their panic grew when an illustrious Catholic joined the fray.

In early 1996 the elderly Abbé Pierre, founder of the acclaimed philanthropic “Emmaus movement” and among the most heralded and esteemed of Catholics in France, boldly came to Garaudy’s defense. It was a remarkable moment. This monk dared to say that the number of deaths at Auschwitz had been exaggerated, and that there should be debate on the question of the existence of Nazi homicidal gas chambers. Abbé Pierre informed the publication *La Croix*: “No longer to be able to speak a word about Jewish affairs across the millennia without being called an anti-Semite is intolerable.” In the newspaper *Liberation* he was quoted as saying that after he offered support for Garaudy’s position, he had seen at the Brussels airport people coming spontaneously to meet and encourage him; he stated that these people told him: “Thank you for having the courage to challenge a taboo.” He added that he hoped, “People will no longer let themselves be called anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic for saying that a Jew is singing out of tune!”

Alas, his bravado was met with such a hurricane of hysteria that it wasn’t long before Abbé Pierre was compelled to leave France and go into hiding in an Italian monastery. He declared to the

newspaper *Corriere della Serra*, “The Church of France has...intervened so as to silence me through the pressure of the media, motivated by an international Zionist lobby.” A lynch mob atmosphere led to Abbé Pierre eventually requesting mercy by taking back his words and asking to be free from relentless harassment. He wrote:

“Anxious to Live the Truth, free of any duress, seeing my words relating to the works of Roger Garaudy, especially the book *Les Mythes fondateurs de la politique israélienne*...I have decided to retract my words, referring the matter entirely to the opinions of the Church experts; and, asking pardon of those whom I may have offended, I wish to leave it to God to be sole judge of the rectitude of everyone's intentions.”

Dr. Faurisson had been engaged with the storm of controversy swirling around Garaudy and the Abbé from early 1996, when Garaudy's publisher had privately entreated him for documents and other evidence whereby Garaudy, whose contingency planning prior to publication of his book had been inadequate at best, could defend his thesis.

It is worth quoting at some length Robert's analysis of the affair, beginning with the sorry spectacle of the Abbé's capitulation: “He thus retracted his words. He confessed his sins. He begged the world's pardon and went to the point of describing himself as being ‘free of any duress.’...Later, he would say to Professor Léon Schwartzenberg: ‘I ask your pardon’ (*Le Figaro*, August 22, 1996). Later still he would choose a means typical of the media to try to obtain the pardon of the Jews and a return to grace with the press. In the issue of *Faits & Documents* (Facts and Documents]) of October 15, Emmanuel Ratier wrote: ‘Abbé Pierre has truly made his *teshuva* (Jewish penitence) regarding his support for Roger Garaudy.

“...The Garaudy/Abbé Pierre affair has created the usual witch-hunt climate maintained by the media in general and the newspaper *Le Monde* in particular. Over the past several months, all sorts of other ‘affairs’ of the same kind have followed on the heels of one another in France, in which the victims have been suspected of having committed the mortal sin of revisionism. Let us cite, by way of example, the case of Olivier Pernet, Professor of Philosophy in Lyon, that of Marc Sautet, a promoter of philosophy cafés, that of Raymond Boudon and Bernard Bourgeois, members of the French Society of Philosophy, that of Noelle Schulman, teacher of physical chemistry at a college in the Yvelines...

“Nevertheless, on September 2nd and 3rd, *Le Nouveau Quotidien* (de Lausanne), published a well-informed study of revisionism in the light of the Garaudy and Abbé Pierre cause célèbre. The author J. Baynac confirmed that the revisionists, whom he called ‘negationists,’ had plenty of reason to rejoice over this scandal which had ‘changed the atmosphere in their favor.’ He noted that, as for the adversaries of the revisionists, ‘disarray has given over to consternation’...and that, since the beginning of ‘the Faurisson affair’ in 1978-1979, historians had preferred to opt out: they ‘have scattered.’

“...Baynac considered that, in order to prove the existence of the Nazi gas chambers, they had depended too heavily on witnesses, something which was ‘*ascientific*.’ As for scientific proof, he recalled the statement by Jewish-American historian Arno Mayer in 1988: ‘Sources for the study of the gas chambers are at once rare and unreliable.’ Then, going even further, he said that it was necessary to have the frankness to recognize that on the matter of documents, traces, or other material evidence proving the existence of the said gas chambers, there was quite simply... nothing!”

Concerning Garaudy and Abbé Pierre, Faurisson, a seasoned veteran of the brutal Zionist war on free thinking, added this trenchant and indeed profound observation: “Two octogenarians who believed that they knew about life and men, discovered suddenly with the surprise of children that their past existence had actually been, on the whole, rather easy. Both of them over the space of a few days had had to withstand an exceptional trial: that which Jewish organizations inflict as a matter of course on individuals who have the misfortune of provoking their wrath. There is in this, on the part of these organizations, neither plot nor conspiracy, but something in the order of ancestral reflex. The media, which are devoted to them and would have to pay dearly were they to do anything contrary to their wishes, know how to mobilize against the ‘anti-Semites,’ which is to say against persons who, with some exceptions, do not hate the Jews, but are hated by them.”

Faurisson and Revisionism in Iran

A decade later, in December, 2006, Prof. Faurisson’s research had obtained so great a reception in the Islamic Republic of Iran that a World War II revisionist history symposium was hosted by that nation, led by Robert. It was a great success and made headlines around the world. In 2012 Faurisson achieved the unimaginable, being the first revisionist historian ever to be honored by a head of state, when Mahmoud Ahmédinjad, the President of Iran, conferred upon him a medal for his “courage, resistance and fighting spirit.” More recently Dr. Faurisson was discovered by a new generation of the young French avant-garde, among them internationally known African-French satirist and comedian, Dieudonné M’bala M’bala.

French people are sometimes viewed as complicated, difficult, humorless and prolix. But when the peculiar genius of the French manifests, it does so in a spectacular burst of defiant individualism personified by men I have dubbed the “The Four Musketeers” of

the modern age: Antonin Artaud, L.F. Céline, Marcel Lefebvre and Robert Faurisson.

There is a streak in the French national character that caused *Le Monde* to prominently publish Faurisson's doubts in 1978, something that would have been nearly impossible in the *New York Times*, or any other major American newspaper. Robert garnered allies from elite ranks of French society: the aforementioned Pierre Guillaume and Serge Thion, and Henri Rocques, whose PhD. dissertation at the University of Nantes in 1985 challenged the claims of gas chambers in Belzec; Bernard Notin, Prof. of Economics at the University of Lyon; this writer's French publisher, Jean Plantin, and others who shall for the present remain anonymous. Despite draconian laws, revisionism in France (prejudicially termed "*negationisme*"), has what Thomas Molnar termed "sociological presence," perhaps more so than in any other country, including Britain and America. Faurisson did not achieve this alone, but it would not have been possible without him. Moreover, throughout the world the scholars and activists he has influenced and inspired are innumerable.

While in full command of his mind and body, for the better part of Robert's last days on earth he was visiting his birthplace in Shepperton, England, where he gave a speech amid some seventy friends and well-wishers, after which he returned to his home in France, where he died peacefully and painlessly. What a tribute to him from that God in whom he did not believe.

Robert Faurisson, 1929-2018. Requiescat in pace.

Michael Hoffman is the author of *The Great Holocaust Trial: The Landmark Battle for the Right to Doubt the West's Most Sacred Relic*, which was [banned by Amazon on August 13](#).

For further research:
[Robert Faurisson's blog](#)